HOW THE NCAA WORKS: Association-wide

While each NCAA division is empowered with setting its own rules and operating guidelines, some topics rise to a level affecting college sports as a whole and need a coordinated voice to guide the Association in a unified direction. For those situations, a group of committees comprising representatives from all three divisions makes recommendations that can impact the entire Association — whether a small, private Division III school or a national champion Football Bowl Subdivision program — equally.

The Association-wide committees work collaboratively with each division’s governance bodies to recommend legislation. These committees explore issues impacting the health and safety of student-athletes or opportunities for women and minority groups in college sports, and recommend changes to the appropriate legislative groups.

The NCAA Board of Governors, the highest-ranking committee in the Association, implements policies by which all three divisions must abide. When the NCAA stopped allowing schools to host championships if their state governments displayed the Confederate flag, it was through a policy created by the Board of Governors.

Changes in legislation, however, require each division to take action. The Association-wide groups propose changes to the committees in each division, which then debate and vote on the proposals through their legislative processes.

ASSOCIATION-WIDE COMMITTEES

Committee on Sportsmanship and Ethical Conduct*
Promotes the values of respect, fairness, civility, integrity, and responsibility in college sports.
11 Members:
3 - Student-athletes (one from each division)
3 - Member school and conference administrators and others who work daily in college sports

Committee on Women’s Athletics
Studies and makes policy recommendations concerning opportunities for women, equity and other issues directly affecting women’s athletics.
18 Members:
3 - Presidents or chancellors (at least one from each division)
3 - Student-athletes (one from each division)
12 - Member school and conference administrators

Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports
Provides expertise and leadership to the Association to promote a healthy and safe environment for student-athletes through research, education, collaboration and policy development.
25 Members:
3 - Divisional governance representatives
3 - Student-athletes
5 - Medical doctors
14 - Experts representing fields of sports and medicine, including college coaches, licensed mental health practitioners, two athletic trainers, a dietician and a sport science researcher

Honors Committee
Selects recipients of awards presented at annual Honors Celebration, including the Theodore Roosevelt and Inspiration awards.
9 Members:
1 - Current or former president, or chancellor
1 - Division I Council member (one from each FBS, FCS and non-football)
1 - Division II Management Council member
1 - Division III Management Council member
1 - Notably distinguished public members who were an NCAA member
2 - Nationally distinguished public members

Minority Opportunities and Interests Committee
Reviews issues related to the interests and advocacy of ethnic and racial minorities, LGBTQ or individuals who have disabilities.
18 Members:
5 - Presidents or chancellors (at least one from each division)
3 - Student-athletes (one from each division)
10 - Member school and conference administrators

Olympic Sports Liaison Committee
Facilitates communication among the NCAA, the U.S. Olympic Committee and the national governing bodies of Olympic sports.
14 Members:
3 - Student-athletes (one from each division)
11 - Member school and conference administrators (at least one from each division)

Postgraduate Scholarship Committee
Selects 138 postgraduate scholarships for graduate school.
7 Members:
1 - Past postgraduate scholarship winner
6 - Member school and conference administrators and others who work daily in college sports

Research Committee*
Monitors the progress of the most significant research endeavors undertaken by the NCAA research staff and oversees the Graduate Student Research Grant Program.
10 Members:
3 - Faculty Athletics Representatives
3 - Athletics administrators
2 - Member school and conference administrators and others who work daily in college sports

Walter Byers Scholarship Committee
Selects one male and one female academically and athletically distinguished NCAA student-athlete to receive scholarships.
7 Members:
6 - Member school and conference administrators
1 - Former student-athlete

ASSOCIATION-WIDE COMMITTEES: Descriptions, Definitions and Members

Achieving a common voice

Each of the Association-wide committees has representation from each of the three NCAA divisions as well as the Board of Governors. The committees are elected from the three divisions, the Board of Governors, and the NCAA Postgraduate Scholarships for Academic Excellence.

The Board of Governors approved the elimination of the committee and directed the divisional governance bodies to pursue appropriate change by making recommendations to the Board of Governors, which has the power to act.

Changes in legislation, however, require each division to take action. The Association-wide groups propose changes to the committees in each division, which then debate and vote on the proposals through their legislative processes.

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

The Board of Governors is the highest-ranking body in the NCAA and focuses on strategic discussions that impact the Association as a whole. The responsibilities of the Board of Governors include:

- Providing final approval and oversight of the Association’s budget, enterprise risk management, strategic planning and establishing policies related to fiduciary responsibility.
- Employing the Association’s president, who shall be administratively responsible to the Board.
- Formulating policies and procedures consistent with the NCAA Constitution.
- In consultation with the leadership of the divisional governing bodies, adopting and implementing legal strategy, Association risk mitigation, and government relations and policy matters that affect the Association.
- Convening the annual Convention and may call for a special convention as needed.

9 voting members:
- Division I: Includes at least one member institution president, director of athletics, conference commissioner
- Division II Presidents Council member
- Division III Presidents Council member
- Independent governors (individuals who are not currently employed or compensated by any member institution or conference and shall be identified as independent by the Board of Governors)
- Graduate NCAA student-athlete (at least one student-athlete representative, voting or ex officio, shall have graduated not more than four years prior to appointment)

Ex officio members:
- Chairs of Division I Council, Division II Management Council and Division III Management Council
- President of a historically Black college or university
- Graduates of NCAA member institutions (must represent each of the three divisions not represented by the voting member-ship of the students)
- NCAA President

ASSOCIATION-WIDE PLAYING RULES

Representatives from the three divisions serve on these Association-wide committees, which make recommendations related to playing rules for specific sports.

Playing Rules Oversight Panel

Oversees playing rules committees, including the final approval of rules changes.

12 Members, school and conference administrators:
6 - Division I representatives
3 - Division II representatives
3 - Division III representatives

* The Board of Governors approved the elimination of the committee and directed the divisional governance bodies to pursue appropriate legislative action necessary to eliminate the committee.
** Update to the composition, duties and name of the Executive Board will be effective Feb. 1, 2024.

Division I Council
Division II Management Council
Division III Management Council
Division III Presidents Council

Each division sets rules and policies specific to its members’ needs but looks to the Board of Governors for guidance on the overall strategy of the Association.

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